

University of Utah

**Master's Program
Handbook**

Department of Political Science

8/1/2023

MASTER'S PROGRAM HANDBOOK

(Updated 6/2023)

Welcome to the Graduate Program of the Department of Political Science at the University of Utah! This Graduate Program Handbook is intended to help students better understand the requirements of the degree and to answer many of the questions about the graduate program. Please become familiar with the handbook, the requirements, deadlines, and important forms necessary to obtain the degree. If students have questions, they should talk with the Director of Graduate Studies or their faculty advisor. We wish students a successful graduate experience in our department.

1. Program Requirements

To earn a master's degree in political science, students are required to complete, with at least a B average (3.0), a minimum of 30 semester hours of approved graduate course work. To receive graduate credit courses must be taken at the 6000 level or higher. A minimum of 21 semester hours must be taken in political science.

1.1. Required core courses:

POLS 6003, Approaches to the Study of Politics

POLS 6001, Quantitative Analysis (for all except Political Theory majors)

A one credit hour statistical programming course (POLS 7975) for all students who will enroll in
POLS 6001

At least one of: POLS 6002, POLS 6004, or POLS 6005

These courses are to be taken in the following order:

Fall semester, year 1: POLS 6003 & the one-credit Programming course (for those who will take
POLS 6001)

Spring semester, year 1: POLS 6001 & either POLS 6004 or POLS 6005 (6004 and 6005 are
optional or required, depending on subfield requirements)

Fall semester, year 2: POLS 6002 (optional or required, depending on subfield requirements)

Spring semester, year 2: POLS 6004 or POLS 6005 (optional or required, depending on subfield
requirements)

1.2. Field courses

3 courses in the Major field (9 credit hours)

2 courses in the Minor field (6 credit hours)

1.3. Elective credit hours: 9

1.4. Total required credit hours: 30

2. ADA Accommodations or Disabilities

The University of Utah and the Department of Political Science seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services, and activities for people with disabilities. If a student needs accommodations in the program, including with the comprehensive exams and/or coursework, reasonable *prior* notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability & Access (CDA), 162 Olpin Union Building. CDA will work with the student and the department or faculty member(s) to make arrangements for

accommodations.

3. Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is expected from all students in our graduate program. Standards of academic honesty apply to all work including course requirements, comprehensive examinations, and independent research. An act of academic misconduct is a violation of the university's regulations regarding student conduct. As such, an act of academic misconduct may result in a failing grade for an assignment or a failing grade for a course. An act of academic misconduct may result in a recommendation to university officials for additional disciplinary action including dismissal from the graduate program. The following definition is from the university's Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities (Policy 6-400, Rev 8, 7/9/2009):

“Academic misconduct” includes, but is not limited to, cheating, misrepresenting one's work, inappropriately collaborating, plagiarism, and fabrication or falsification of information, as defined further below. It also includes facilitating academic misconduct by intentionally helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic misconduct.

Definitions of these terms as well as information regarding a student's rights and responsibilities are available in the university's policies and procedures manual: <https://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.php>.

3.1. Appeals Process (from Policy 6-400: Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities (“Student Code”))

A student who believes that an academic action taken in connection with Section IV, Subsection A of the Student Code is arbitrary or capricious should, within twenty (20) business days of notification of the academic action, discuss the academic action with the involved faculty member and attempt to resolve the disagreement. If the faculty member does not respond within ten (10) business days, if the student and faculty member are unable to resolve the disagreement, or if the faculty member fails to take the agreed upon action within ten (10) business days, the student may appeal the academic action in accordance with the following procedures. It is understood that all appeals and proceedings regarding academic actions will initiate with the faculty and administrators in the college or program offering the course in question. If the course is cross-listed, appeals and proceedings shall take place with the faculty and administrators offering the section for which the student is registered.

Appeal to Chair of the Department or Dean's Designee. Within forty (40) business days of notification of the academic action, the student shall appeal the academic action in writing to, and consult with, the chair of the relevant department regarding such academic action. Within fifteen (15) business days of consulting with the student, the chair shall notify the student and faculty member, in writing, of his/her determination of whether the academic action was arbitrary or capricious and of the basis for that decision. If the chair determines that the academic action was arbitrary or capricious, the chair shall take appropriate action to implement his/her decision unless the faculty member appeals the decision. If the chair fails to respond in fifteen (15) business days, the student may appeal to the Academic Appeals Committee.

Appeal to Academic Appeals Committee. If either party disagrees with the chair's decision, that

party may appeal to the college's Academic Appeals Committee within fifteen (15) business days of notification of the chair's decision in accordance with the procedures set forth in accordance with the procedures set forth in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities, Policy 6-400..

For more detailed information regarding the rights of students and the academic appeals process, please see this policy at <http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.php>.

4. Coursework Requirements

4.1. Required core courses

Students should take **POLS 6001** and **POLS 6003** during their first year in the graduate program. Students may have these courses waived if they have taken their equivalent at another institution. Waiver decisions are recommended by the student's supervisory committee and approved by the Director of Graduate Studies.

4.2. Major and minor field requirements

Courses are offered in the following five fields in political science:

1. American Politics
2. Comparative Politics
3. International Relations
4. Political Theory
5. Public Administration

Students must designate one of these fields as a major field, and a second as a minor field. Students should select courses in consultation with their supervisory committees. Some 6000-level courses meet with 5000-level courses. The 6000-level version of the course will have a separate syllabus featuring assignments appropriate to graduate study, and graduate students should register for the 6000-level course.

4.2.1. American Politics

- **As a major field**, students shall take **two** from among the following three courses:
 - POLS 6281, American Political Institutions;
 - POLS 6282, American Political Behavior;
 - POLS 6283, American Policy Processes;

and **one** additional 6000-level American Politics course:

- POLS 6025, American Political Thought;
- POLS 6120, Judicial Process;
- POLS 6170, Politics and the American Economy;
- POLS 6321, Health Policy;
- POLS 6322, Environmental Policy;
- POLS 6430, Asian American Politics;
- Or another course approved by the student's supervisory committee, the American Politics field chair, and the Director of Graduate Studies.

- **As a minor field**: Students shall take at least **one** of the following courses:
 - POLS 6281, American Political Institutions;
 - POLS 6282, American Political Behavior;
 - POLS 6283, American Policy Processes;

and **one** additional 6000-level American Politics course (see list above).

4.2.2. Comparative Politics

- **As a major field**, students shall take:
 - POLS 6400, Proseminar Comparative Politics;

and **one** of the following:

 - POLS 6405, Comparative Public Policy;
 - POLS 6740, Political Change;

and **one** additional 6000-level Comparative Politics course

 - 6410, New Democracies;
 - 6420, European Union;
 - 6425, Atlantic Rim Politics;
 - 6440, Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict;
 - 6450, Political Violence and Terrorism;
 - 6840, Seminar: Middle East Politics;
 - Or another course approved by the student's supervisory committee, the Comparative Politics field chair, and the Director of Graduate Studies. - **As a minor field**: Students shall take POLS 6400 and either 6405 or 6740.
- * Students may also complete both POLS 6405 and 6740 to satisfy the major field requirement.

4.2.3. International Relations

- **As a major field**, students shall take:
 - POLS 6850, Field Seminar in International Relations;

and **one** of the following:

 - POLS 6630, Foundations of International Organization,
 - POLS 6690, Foundations of International Security;
 - POLS 6710, International Political Economy;

and **one** additional 6000-level International Relations course:

 - 6460, International Relations of Africa;
 - 6470, International Relations of the Middle East;
 - 6480, International Relations of East Asia;
 - 6490, International Relations of Latin America;
 - 6610, International Law;
 - 6660, American Foreign Policy;
 - 6670, US National Security Policy;
 - 6720, Politics of North-South Economic Relations;
 - 6750, Rise of Global Capitalism;
 - 6800, Theories of International Relations;
 - Or another course approved by the student's supervisory committee, the International Relations field chair, and the Director of Graduate Studies.

- **As a minor field**, students shall take POLS 6850 and one from POLS 6630, 6690, or 6710.

4.2.4. Political Theory

- **As a major field**, students must take the following two (2) courses:
 - 6000, Foundations of Political Thought
 - 6010, Modern Political Thought

- and **one (1)** additional 6000-level course from the following:
 - POLS 6015, Democratic Theory
 - POLS 6025, American Political Thought
 - POLS 6035, Contemporary Political Thought
 - POLS 6140, Feminist Political Theory
 - POLS 6961, Topics in Political Theory
 - Or another course approved by the student's supervisory committee, the Political Theory subfield chair, and the Director of Graduate Studies.

- **As a minor field**, students must take POLS 6000 and 6010.

5. Other Course Information

5.1. Elective and Thesis Hours

In addition to completing the required core, major field, and minor field courses, students are required to complete a master's paper. This requirement can be satisfied either by completing a *master's essay* or a *master's thesis* (see section on research paper requirements below). The selection of courses for elective hours depends on which master's paper option is chosen.

Students who select the *master's essay* option may complete their minimum 30 hours by choosing three elective graduate courses from within political science or from relevant graduate courses outside of political science. For courses outside of political science, students should consult with their committee chair or provisional supervisor because these courses will need to be approved by the student's supervisory committee and the Director of Graduate Studies to be counted as part of the student's program of study.

Students who select the master's thesis option must complete 6 semester hours of POLS 6970, Thesis Research: Master's (resident tuition is charged for POLS 6970 regardless of residency status).

5.2. Required Teaching Class for Teaching Assistants

Students who serve as teaching assistants are required to register for POLS 6201, Teaching Political Science, when they first serve as teaching assistants. This class is one semester hour. Students interested in pursuing a teaching career are strongly recommended to take this class. *This credit does not count toward the 30 hours required for the degree.*

5.3. Additional Master of Arts (MA) and Master of Science (MS) Requirements

5.3.1. MA Graduate Language Requirement

Candidates for the Master of Arts degree in the Department of Political Science must demonstrate at least "standard proficiency" in a foreign language. Standard proficiency assumes a reading-comprehension level expected of a student who has *completed* one year of college foreign-language instruction (1020) or the equivalent. *Students can demonstrate proficiency in one of the following ways:*

- **Language Test:** Language tests may be used to demonstrate language proficiency. *Student must include test results as documented proof.* For testing options, see website.
- **Language Classes:** Undergraduate and graduate courses taken within the past six years may be used to demonstrate a language proficiency. *Students must include school transcripts as documented proof (unofficial transcripts are accepted).*
- **Grade/Pass:** Students must earn *at least a B grade (3.0)* or better in a language course; or a passing score on a foreign language examination equivalent to standard proficiency (*passing out of a 1020 level*).
- **Native Speaker:** The department may choose to waive the Graduate Language Requirement if a student speaks English as a second language. *Native Speakers of a language other than English must attach documented proof.* See website for documentation options and forms.

Please refer to the Department of World Languages & Cultures website for all updated information and the required Graduate Language Verification form:
<https://languages.utah.edu/student-services/languageverification.php>

5.3.2. MS Methods Requirement

MS students will be required by their supervisory committee to take additional course work in quantitative methods (POLS 6002 or its equivalent in another department). As this methods course requirement is considered a prerequisite for the degree, this course work does not count toward the 30 hours required for the degree.

5.3.3. Repeated Course Numbers

Some course numbers may be taken up to three times for credit as the content of the courses will vary depending on the instructor. These courses include: POLS 6961, Topics in Political Theory; 6962, Topics in American Public Policy; 6965, Special Topics in Public Administration; and 6960, Special Topics.

5.3.4. Independent Research Courses

Students who wish to do focused reading and research under faculty supervision may register for POLS 6975, Independent Research: Master's. Students should see the Graduate Program Coordinator for the appropriate class number in order to register under the correct instructor. Students are permitted to count a maximum of 6 semester hours of independent research hours in their program of study. The number of credit hours per course will be determined in consultation with the course instructor. Regular grades are given for this course, and credits count toward the 30 semester hours required for the degree. Independent research courses are not to be used in place of existing graduate courses. In rare cases, independent research credits may be used to take an undergraduate course for graduate credit if the instructor agrees and adds sufficient work to make the course appropriate for graduate credit.

5.3.5. Transfer Credits

The university's Graduate School permits up to 6 semester hours of graduate credit be

transferred from another *accredited* institution. The credits must be from a comparable graduate program, and the classes must be comparable to courses taught at the University of Utah. Transfer courses must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies to be counted toward a political science graduate degree. **Transfer credits cannot be accepted if they were used toward a degree at the previous institution.** Also, a student must have earned at least a B in a course to be eligible for transfer credit. The student is responsible for providing sufficient information about the content of the course(s) for the supervisory committee to make an appropriate decision. The student must verify that the Office of Graduate Admissions has received an official transcript listing the course(s). Transfer credits applied to the degree must be included along with University of Utah credits on the "Program of Study." When the Office of Graduate Records receives the "Program of Study," they will check the student's record to verify that the course(s) appears on an official transcript and was not used toward another degree. Getting credit for transfer courses is separate from having courses waived, or substituted, by the department. If a course requirement is *waived* by the Department of Political Science, it does not necessarily mean the student will get transfer credit for having completed that course, unless the student files the transfer credit paperwork with the Office of Graduate Admissions.

6. Grades

6.1. Minimum GPA

According to Graduate School policy, candidates for graduate degrees are required to maintain a 3.0 or higher grade point average in courses counted toward the degree. A grade below C- is not accepted for credit toward a graduate degree.

6.2. Incompletes

A grade of “Incomplete” (I) may be given when a student is unable to complete the work for a course within the semester in which the course is taken, for circumstances beyond the student’s control. The student must be passing the course and have completed at least 80% of the required coursework. When the work is completed and the instructor submits a “Change of Final Grade” form; the ‘I’ will remain on the student's transcript and a letter grade will be inserted next to the I. Failure to complete the course within one calendar year will automatically convert the I to a failing grade (EU). A professor can still change a grade after a year, or the course may be retaken. If a professor changes an ‘E’ to another letter grade after a year’s time, both the professor's signature and the department chair's signature are required. A ‘T’ (work-in-progress) grade is appropriately given in the master's program only for POLS 6970, Thesis Research: Master's. A ‘T’ is used until the thesis is completed, when a letter grade is turned in for the entire project. A grade of ‘T’ does not convert to an E grade. The ‘T’ remains on the student's record until the instructor submits the Change of Final Grade form indicating the grade received. Instructors are discouraged from giving incomplete grades except in unusual circumstances (for further information about incomplete grades and eligibility for financial aid, see section on Teaching Assistant Policies below).

6.3. Credit/No Credit

Master’s students may not take courses in political science on a credit/no credit basis except POLS 6980, Faculty Consultation, which is always credit/no credit. Students are discouraged from taking courses outside the department for credit/no credit and may do so only with the approval of their supervisory committee.

6.4. Retaking Courses

Students may retake courses in an attempt to raise their grades. At the point of entry of the first grade, a student’s transcript will note that the course has been repeated. The new grade is shown in the semester in which the course is retaken. The student's GPA is recalculated to eliminate the effect of the first grade and recognize only the new grade.

7. Registration Requirements and Time Limits

7.1. Full-time Status

Master’s students are considered full-time if they are registered for 9 or more credits in a semester.

7.2. Minimum Continuing Registration

Graduate School policy requires that all graduate students be registered continuously from the time of formal admission through completion of all requirements for the degree, except summers, unless granted an official leave of absence (see below). Minimum registration consists of at least three semester credit hours of course work or POLS 6980, Faculty Consultation. The hours are graded credit/no credit and so do not count toward the 30 credit hours required for the degree. The student's committee chair should be the supervisor for POLS 6980.

Students who are unable to maintain the continuous registration requirement should apply for a leave of absence. According to the Graduate School policy, students who do not maintain continuous registration and do not obtain a leave of absence will have their supervisory committee terminated and their records inactivated. To reactivate a file at a later time, a student must reapply for admission to the Office of Graduate Admissions.

Nonresident tuition is not imposed on students whose total registration includes only course numbers in the range 6970 to 6989 (Thesis Research, Faculty Consultation) in a given semester. If a student enrolls in courses that are outside the 6970-6989 range, they become subject to nonresident tuition charges.

7.3. Leave of Absence

Students who wish to discontinue their studies for one or more semesters must file a "Request for Leave of Absence" form (available here: <http://registrar.utah.edu/handbook/leave.php>). The form must be signed by the chair of the student's supervisory committee, the Director of Graduate Studies, and then submitted to Registrar's Office for approval from the Dean of the Graduate School.

A student must apply for a leave of absence for a current semester before the last day of classes of that semester. If a leave is approved for a semester in which the student is registered, the student must withdraw from those classes or grades of E will be reported. The leave of absence is void if the student registers for classes in a semester for which a leave was granted. At the end of the leave period, the student must register for at least three credit hours or make another request for a leave of absence. If a student wishes to extend the leave of absence beyond one year, they must submit a new application along with justification for the extended leave and a written plan for how they will get back on track once they return from their leave. This plan should be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies who, in conjunction with the departments' Graduate Committee, will review and grant the extension if the committee deems it appropriate. Time spent on an official leave of absence does not count toward the period allowed to complete the degree.

7.4. Time Limits

According to departmental policy, master's students are expected to complete the degree within two calendar years after admission to the program. Requests for extensions must be recommended by the student's supervisory committee and approved by the Director of Graduate Studies. **The Graduate School requires all work for the master's degree to be completed within four consecutive calendar years.** Only the Dean of the Graduate School may modify or waive this requirement.

8. Supervisory Committee

The Graduate School policy requires students form their supervisory committees no later than the second semester of graduate work. Probation may be applied if the committee is not formed by that semester. A supervisory committee for a master's student consists of three regular faculty members, two of whom must be faculty in the University of Utah Political Science Department. The chair of the supervisory committee should be from the student's major field of study. Other committee members may be drawn from any of the department's fields of study, or from an allied department. Students may choose to have a representative from their minor area on their committees, however, this is not required. If a student wants to have a regular faculty member from another institution on their committee that professor must provide the department with a vita or short professional biography. Committee decisions are made by majority vote.

Students are responsible for forming their supervisory committees. They should ask prospective members to serve on their committee, and once the student has formed the committee, they need to meet with the Graduate Program Coordinator to input the committee members into the Graduate Student Degree Tracking System (GTS); then, each committee member will need to go into the GTS and approve their service on the committee. Students may change the membership of their committees, just as members may decide to leave committees. All such changes should be made in consultation with the concerned parties and with the Director of Graduate Studies. Student should meet with the Graduate Program Coordinator to update the committee information in the GTS.

Each student is primarily responsible for arranging a supervisory committee. Students should meet with their committees at least once a year, or more frequently if needed. Supervisory committees have the following responsibilities:

1. To help plan and approve a student's program of study. Committees can recommend transfer credits or waivers consistent with program requirements to the Graduate School and/or the Director of Graduate Studies.
2. To guide and evaluate a student's research and approve the topic of the master's paper.
3. To conduct the oral defense of the student's essay or thesis.

9. Program of Study

Students must meet with the Graduate Program Coordinator to enter their Program of Study in the GTS at least two months prior to the beginning of the semester in which they plan to graduate. The student must list those courses that will be applied to meet the requirements for a master's degree. Courses that are not counted toward the 30 hours required for the master's degree, such as Teaching Political Science, language courses, or the quantitative methods course used to fulfill the MS requirements, should not be listed on the program of study.

10. Research Paper Requirement

All students must successfully defend either an essay or thesis to fulfill the requirements for a master's degree. Before beginning an essay or thesis, a student should consult with their supervisory chair and committee. Students should arrange a meeting with their supervisory committees to seek formal approval of their topic. Students are also encouraged to use this committee meeting to review their Program of Study for the Master's Degree. If a student's research involves the use of human

subjects, the student will need to get approval from the University's Institutional Review Board prior to undertaking any research with human subjects.

There are two options for fulfilling the requirement of a master's research paper: the master's essay or the master's thesis.

10.1. Essay

The master's essay is a research paper that is approximately 30 pages in length. The essay is commonly a revised and expanded version of a seminar paper in a student's major field. Students may take three semester hours of course, POLS 6975, Independent Research: Master's, to receive credit for the work on their essays. Students who revise seminar papers usually do so without additional course credit. An electronic copy of the final approved master's essay must be given to the Graduate Program Coordinator for departmental records.

10.2. Thesis

A master's thesis is a substantial piece of original research and is typically 50 to 80 pages in length. Students who elect to write a thesis must include 6 semester hours of POLS 6970, Thesis Research: Master's, as part of their program of study. Thesis hours are counted toward the 30 semester hours required for the degree. Regulations governing the writing, format, and distribution of the thesis are specified in *A Handbook for Theses and Dissertations* available from the University's Thesis Office (302 Park Building, <https://gradschool.utah.edu/thesis/handbook/>) and students should obtain a copy before beginning their thesis.

10.3. Final Oral Defense

Graduate School policy requires that all master's candidates pass a final oral examination conducted by their supervisory committee. This exam covers only the essay or thesis topic and not unrelated course work. The completed essay or thesis should be given to all committee members well in advance of the date of the oral defense. Graduate School policy specifies that students should submit acceptable drafts to the committee chair at least three weeks in advance, and to the other committee members at least two weeks in advance of the oral defense date. If the defense is successful, the committee chair will need to let the Graduate Program Coordinator know to enter the successful defense information in the GTS, and the committee chair will need to approve this in the GTS. Students should expect to make additional revisions to their papers after the oral defense in order to put the paper into final approved form.

Students must be registered for at least three credit hours during the semester in which they defend their final essay, even if they defend during the summer. POLS 6980, Faculty Consultation, should be used for this purpose if no further courses or thesis credits are needed. Students do not need to be registered after a successful oral defense, even if minor revisions to the essay or thesis are necessary.

11. Application to PhD Program

Students in the MA or MS program who want to pursue a PhD immediately after the completion of their master's degree may apply to the PhD program at the end of the semester in which they complete their master's requirements. For example, a student who completes the master's requirements during spring semester can apply for the PhD program at the end of that spring semester

and, if accepted, begin course work for the PhD in the fall semester. This application procedure applies only to students completing the MA or MS degree in political science who meet the continuing registration requirement. Students completing the MPA degree or students who do not meet the continuing registration requirement must follow the regular application procedures for admission to the Graduate School and the department.

Students who have completed a master's degree in political science at the University of Utah within the preceding three years may count the course work completed for their master's degree toward the fulfillment of the PhD requirements.

Master's students who want to apply to the PhD program should submit the following application materials to the Graduate Program Coordinator:

1. A letter of intent describing the reasons for pursuing a PhD and the likely academic focus in the PhD program.
2. Three letters of recommendation, including a letter from the chair of the master's supervisory committee.
3. A copy of a paper representing the student's best academic work, such as the master's essay, major research paper, or other substantial academic paper.

The deadline for submitting application materials is one week after the end of the semester but no later than May 15. The Department will make its admissions decisions approximately two weeks later.

Please note: Master's students applying for financial aid from the department, whether currently funded by the department or not, must meet the **regular application deadlines** for departmental financial aid. That is, master's students who intend to apply for admission to the PhD program at the end of spring semester must apply for financial aid by **January 15** (if not currently funded) or **February 1** (if funded and seeking renewal).

11.1. Fast Track Option

Students currently enrolled in the master's program who do not need to complete a master's degree may apply for the fast track option at the end of their first year in the master's program. Students on the fast track enter the PhD program in their second year of graduate study, and are permitted to count their first year's course work toward the PhD requirements.

The application deadline for the fast track option is after the end of spring semester, but no later than May 15. The Graduate Committee will make its admissions decisions approximately two weeks later. To be considered for the fast track, students must meet the following requirements:

1. Submission of a cover letter addressing the reasons for applying for the fast track option.
2. Request a letter of endorsement from the chair of the student's supervisory committee to the graduate committee.
3. Have completed a minimum of 12 semester hours of political science course work at the 6000 level.
4. Have completed POLS 6001 (or equivalent) and at least one 6000 level course in the student's major field of study.
5. Have a GPA of approximately 3.7 or higher in political science course work at the 6000 level.

6. Submit one research paper that furnishes evidence of the student's ability to undertake doctoral-level research.

Students should submit the necessary materials to Graduate Program Coordinator prior to the May 15 deadline. If the student is admitted to the PhD program, the student must be sure that the Change of Graduate Classification form is filed with the Graduate School by the Graduate Program Coordinator.

12. Financial Aid

12.1. Departmental Assistance

Financial aid available from the department consists of a number of teaching assistantships and graduate fellowships. The assistantships pay a stipend and a tuition waiver and normally involve assisting faculty members with large undergraduate classes or with their research. The graduate fellowships also carry a stipend and a tuition waiver, but have no teaching obligations. All of these awards are made on the basis of academic merit, not financial need.

Other opportunities may arise for remunerated work in the department (i.e., the department may employ graders for large classes and individual faculty members may hire students as research assistants). Federal financial aid recipients may be offered work-study positions. Interested students should contact the Graduate Program Coordinator. Advanced graduate students may be employed to teach courses for the department. Students interested in teaching should contact the Director of Graduate Studies or the Department Associate Chair.

12.2. University and External Financial Aid

Information about student loans is available from Financial Aid and Scholarships Office in 105 Student Services Building. Other financial aid for master's students is limited, but students writing a thesis may be eligible to apply for a Graduate Research Fellowship from the University. Students apply through the department, which must rank applicants and forward the top applications to the Graduate School. More information about financial aid can be found on the Grad Hub.

13. Teaching Assistantship Policies

13.1. Tuition Benefit

Students who are funded through the department may qualify for a tuition benefit by which their tuition costs are covered by the university. The tuition benefit program is administered by the Graduate School and students must comply with the Graduate School's regulations regarding the tuition benefit program in order to receive the benefit. Out of state (not international) graduate students who receive tuition support must apply for residency at the end of their first year of study, but their ability to establish residency will not affect their receipt of tuition. Students who enter their graduate programs with a baccalaureate degree (or its equivalent) are limited to two years (four semesters) of tuition benefit for the completion of the master's degree.

The Tuition Benefit Program requires that students take a minimum of 9 hours and a maximum of 12 hours per semester. POLS 6980, Faculty Consultation, can be used for this purpose if further course work or thesis hours are unnecessary. Undergraduate courses (5000 or

below) required by the department for their graduate students count toward the registration requirement of 9 credit hours per semester but do not qualify for a tuition benefit. Students taking language courses must register using the graduate-level number (6000 or above). Tuition will be paid up to a maximum of 12 hours per semester. Departmental policy requires a written request to the Graduate Director before taking more than 12 hours. However, funded students pay for any credit hours above the maximum 12 hours. The Tuition Benefit Program covers tuition and mandatory fees only; it does not cover special fees or for courses that are charged differential tuition. Students who receive a tuition benefit must pay any charges assessed as special fees from their own resources.

If a graduate student who is receiving a tuition benefit fails to meet the requirements and restrictions of departmental or Graduate School policy, the tuition benefit will be revoked by the Graduate School and the student will be billed for tuition at the full relevant rate. It is the funded student's responsibility to ensure that he or she is in compliance with departmental and Graduate School policies concerning registration, academic progress, professional conduct, and the like. For further information on the Tuition Benefit Program, see the Graduate School form, "Graduate Student Tuition Benefit Support Guidelines."

13.2. Assignment of Assistantship Duties

Specific assignments as a teaching or research assistant will depend on the needs of the department each semester. Funded graduate students are expected to fulfill their teaching assistant and research assistant duties as assigned. The hourly expectation is 20 hours per week. Teaching assistants primarily provide support to political science lecture courses, and TAs are expected to be available during this time as assigned. They should make arrangements to be available as department assignments dictates. If a TA/RA anticipates any difficulty fulfilling their responsibilities, they should notify the Director of Graduate Studies right away.

First year teaching assistants are required to attend the university's teaching assistant orientation and teaching workshop held by the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence (CTLE). **International students who have been appointed to teaching assistantships are required to take the International Teaching Assistant Program (ITAP) training workshop in addition to the university's orientation.** The Graduate School requires international students to obtain certification from the International Teaching Assistant Program. This certification is accomplished through full participation and a favorable evaluation from the ITA Workshop which is held once a year in August. For information on the certification process, see ITA program webpage (<http://www.utah.edu/ita>).

All teaching assistants are required to attend the department's annual orientation for graduate students, which is held the week before the start of fall semester classes. First year teaching assistants are required to take the one semester course, Teaching Political Science I (POLS 6201).

Before the beginning of each semester, the Director of Graduate Studies invites faculty requests for assistance with large classes or research projects. Assistants are asked for their own class schedules and for preferences in assignments. The Director then assigns some students to be teaching assistants for particular classes and other students to assist faculty members with research. Assignments normally change every semester. At the end of each semester, supervising faculty members file a written evaluation of each assistant's work, which is given to the assistant and put in his or her file for use by the Graduate Committee.

13.3. Financial Aid Renewal

Students who want to be considered for an additional year of departmental funding need to complete the “Graduate Student Financial Aid Renewal Application” available on our website or from the Graduate Program Coordinator. As indicated on the application, students must include a cover letter, a copy of their grades, one letter of recommendation from their supervisory committee chair, and teaching evaluations with the renewal application form. **The application deadline for a renewal of financial aid is February 1.**

14. Policy on Incomplete Grades

Students are expected to finish the courses in the semester in which they are taken. The department maintains the following policies for responding to “Incompletes” in the awarding of assistantships and fellowships.

- 14.1.** The Graduate Committee will consider grades of I or T when awarding aid.
- 14.2.** No assistantship or fellowship will be awarded to a continuing student who, during the year prior to applying for aid carried an I or T for more than one semester, except for work on a master’s thesis or essay, unless extenuating circumstances are present.
- 14.3.** A student holding an assistantship or fellowship will be suspended from the award for one semester if the student has an I or T more than a semester old. This policy applies to all course work except for work on a master's thesis or essay or unless extenuating circumstances are present.
- 14.4.** Students may request that the Graduate Committee consider extenuating circumstances for incompletes such as prolonged illness, family emergency, failure of a faculty member to grade a student's work, or extraordinary research projects requiring an extended time frame. Students must provide relevant supporting documentation to the Graduate Committee with their written request. Students should inform the members of their supervisory committee of their circumstances, but the Graduate Committee will make the final decision on the student's eligibility for aid.

15. Probation and Termination

Students may be placed on probation or be terminated from the program by the Director of Graduate Studies. Probation may occur if the student’s cumulative GPA is below 3.0. Probation will be lifted if the student raises the cumulative GPA to above 3.0 by the following semester. Probation also may be used when a student does not make reasonable progress toward the degree as indicated by the accumulation of incompletes. Probation will be lifted if the student demonstrates reasonable progress as indicated by the removal of incompletes by the beginning of the following semester. Probation also may be used when a student fails to form a supervisory committee by the beginning of the student's third semester. Probation will be lifted if and when the student forms the supervisory committee. At the discretion of the Director of Graduate Studies, in consultation with the Department Chair and the Graduate Studies Committee, termination from the graduate program may occur when the student remains on probation for two consecutive semesters.

16. Joint Degree Program Policy

There are no formal joint degree programs recognized for master's students in political science. There are, however, several for students in the Master of Public Administration/MPA program. Since the Graduate School does not permit credit to be applied to more than one degree in the absence of a formal joint degree program, individually arranged joint degrees are not permitted. Concurrent enrollment in more than one degree is permitted, if all requirements for both programs are met.

17. Student Activities and Opportunities

17.1. Graduate Student Advisory Committee (GSAC)

The Graduate Student Advisory Committee (GSAC) is the primary graduate student organization for the department. The GSAC consists of a chair, publishing director/vice chair, secretary/treasurer, funding director, activities director, webmaster, and four at large positions. GSAC works on various projects and activities, such as new student recruitment, Working Papers Series, professional and career development workshops, the graduate student website, and various social events held throughout the year. The GSAC has a formal role in evaluating the teaching and advising work of faculty members under review for retention, promotion, and tenure. In addition, GSAC has representation on the Betty Glad Selection Committee—a research grant program administered by the department. GSAC is composed of political science graduate students and acts as the primary liaison between graduate students and the department. Any issues or questions that arise during the course of studies can and should be directed to the graduate student committee. All graduate students are encouraged to participate in GSAC at some point in their studies so that all can meaningfully contribute to the department and enrich the experience of fellow students.

17.2. Conference Travel Funds

Presenting original research at an academic conference can be a useful learning experience and a valuable step in one's academic career. The department seeks to encourage and support graduate students to present their research at scholarly conferences by providing some funds to reimburse the costs of travel. Students may receive only one departmental travel award per academic year. Note, the department's resources are limited and we seek to use these resources in a manner that is most beneficial to graduate students and the department as a whole. As such, preference in the awarding of departmental travel funds will be given to graduate students who are well advanced in their academic program and who are presenting research related to their dissertations or other significant research projects. This policy does not limit who may attend or present at a conference, it applies only to providing departmental funding. For additional information on travel funds, please see the department webpage: <https://poli-sci.utah.edu/>.

17.3. Best Graduate Paper Award

Every spring the department sponsors a contest for the best paper written by a graduate student in political science in the past year. The deadline for submitting papers is usually around the middle of March and will be announced by the Graduate Program Coordinator. The winner of the paper competition is announced at the annual departmental banquet and receives a \$200 award.

17.4. Todd Mitchell Memorial Teaching Award

This prize was established in recognition of Todd Mitchell's role as a superior teacher when he was a graduate student in the department of political science. The award is given to a one graduate student each year who, in the judgment of the Graduate Committee, has been an exemplary teacher in the department. Nominations for the award are normally due in mid-March. Faculty, undergraduate students, and graduate students (including self-nominations) are all encouraged to nominate graduate students who are superior teachers for this award. The award is announced and the \$200 award given at the annual department banquet.

17.5. Honor Societies

Master's students in political science are potentially eligible for two honor societies: Pi Sigma Alpha and Phi Kappa Phi. Pi Sigma Alpha is the national political science honor society. Graduate students are eligible if they have 10 semester hours of graduate political science course work and a cumulative GPA of 3.0. Application forms are available in Room 3345 Gardner Commons Building. Phi Kappa Phi is a general graduate honor society. Master's students are eligible if they have a 3.8 GPA at the time of graduation. Eligible students who wish to be nominated should bring this to the attention of the Graduate Program Coordinator.

18. Administration of the Graduate Program

18.1. Director of Graduate Studies

The Department's Director of Graduate Studies is a regular, full-time faculty member who assumes this position for a term of approximately three years. The Director chairs the Graduate Committee and supervises its functions. The Graduate Director is available to assist students with problems, especially those related to supervisory committees, departmental requirements, or university requirements. The Graduate Director will also assist with professional development and the job placement process.

18.2. Graduate Committee

The Graduate Committee is composed of the Director of Graduate Studies, political science faculty members chosen by the department chair for two-year terms, and a graduate student selected by current graduate students for a one-year term. The Graduate Committee oversees the functioning of the graduate program and advises the faculty on issues of policy, curriculum, and degree requirements. The Graduate Committee conducts the admission process, awards departmental financial aid, reviews student progress, and selects the winner of the graduate paper contest and graduate teaching award. The graduate student member of the committee is a voting member of the committee for most decisions, except those decisions related to personnel matters such as financial aid.

18.3. Graduate Program Coordinator

The Graduate Program Coordinator works with the Director of Graduate Studies, the Graduate Committee, and the department chair in administering the graduate program. The Program Advisor provides staff support for the committee. The Graduate Program Coordinator assembles admission files, communicates with the Graduate Admissions Office about applicants, handles the administration of the Tuition Benefit Program, assists students with the completion of required paperwork, and maintains the graduate student database.